

First stoplight will get you there

When Colorado folks ask me how to get to Norton — from Denver, for example — my explanation is simple: Get on I-70, exit at Byers, take U.S. 36 East to the first stoplight.

Good Evening Norton
Tom Dreiling



I am looking forward to Oct. 31 — Halloween! No, I have grown out of going *Trick or Treat*, but that doesn't dampen my spirit of watching the little kids with containers of all kinds in tow crisscrossing the streets in quest of treasure — in this case, sweets! I remember some years ago, like back in the mid-50s (no, not 1850s), when my brother Jim answered the door on Halloween night to see three bigger kids with sacks in hand yelling, "TRICK OR TREAT!" Jim looked at them for a minute or two, then invited them into his home. Once they were inside he had them follow him to the kitchen, where he pulled out three glasses, put in several pieces of ice and filled the glasses with water. He handed each a glass and said, "Here you are, guys. Happy Halloween!" Jim's wife Liz just shook her head. The trick or treat trio didn't see anything funny about his treats, so they left the house grumbling. After they were gone, Jim, Liz, myself and I think friend Glenn was there, too, had a good laugh. Well, later in the night when we left Jim's place, Jim and Liz walked us out to the driveway to say good-bye. It was then Jim discovered the trick or treat trio *tricked*. That was probably the most detailed soap job ever rendered to a vehicle. And what was Jim's response? Simply this, "I guess next year we'll go back to candy!"

And, too, Halloween has another special meaning: Miki, a niece of mine, was born on Halloween in (wow! I forgot the year!) Oh well, you never ask a lady her age and she probably wouldn't want anyone to remember, anyway!

So, you ask, do I have a favorite in the 2008 presidential race? Certainly I do, much like each of you. And who is it? Well, let's put it this way: going back to George Herbert Walker Bush/William Jefferson Clinton in the early 1990s, I was on the losing side. Then in the mid-1990s, when it was President Bill Clinton/Sen. Bob Dole, I was again on the losing side. Then in 2000 when it was Gov. George W. Bush/Vice President Al Gore, I was on the losing side. In 2004 when it was President George W. Bush/Sen. John Kerry, I was finally on the winning side. So you see, I was on the losing side in 3 of the last 4 presidential races.

After the votes are tallied and the decision made on Nov. 4, I will let you know if I was on the winning side or the losing side. I feel pretty good about my choice, good enough to predict a lopsided win.

Everybody seems to be looking at the poll numbers this year as they assess the chances of each candidate. After some deliberation and closely studying the many polls, I've settled on 14.

Thursday morning, when I rolled (literally) out of bed when the radio came on at 6 a.m., the voice said the temperature was 42 degrees. That explained the chill in my space (that's what I call my place). I haven't adjusted the thermostat to heat from cool — yet. But something tells me the real *chilly* is not too far off. But beings we are beings, we usually wait until the *chill* becomes *cold* before we do anything about the furnace. Right!

Can you believe this? A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering?! And then a report in a newspaper told of a hole being found in the wall at a nudist camp. But the report assured readers not to worry, because the police are looking into it!?

I haven't noticed many yard signs supporting presidential candidates. But then why should there be? Republican registration is so overwhelming that we all know Sen. McCain owns this county. In fact, he owns Kansas and its six electoral college votes. Which might explain why he has pretty much ignored us. But even in politics, one should not take anything for granted.

Have a good evening! And as you approach the church of your choice this weekend, keep in mind that the good Lord campaigns inside each of us 24/7!

Obama?
McCain?

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Mr. Austerman issues response

To the Editor,
I have no quarrel with Gil and Carol Otter's *Letter to the Editor*, and also Beverley Bethune. I commend them for doing this, because maybe all of us can learn from letters to the editor.

More people should do this because that's one freedom we have left. Everyone has the right to voice their opinion in the good old U.S.A.

I didn't talk about the war in Korea in my first letter and Vietnam, because I thought the vets that were on the ground there knew exactly what, when and why about the conditions as they seen it and lived it. I know a small amount about what our troops on the ground went through.

Sally and I were not there in body, but we were there 24/7 (in our thoughts, spirit, mind in prayers).

Our oldest son flew helicopters with food supplies, medicine and wounded GI's, so our mind was there 24/7.

As for the war in Vietnam, our troops on the ground went through living hell 24/7 because of the terrain, rain swamps and stinking water, plus the enemy; same for the troops in the South Pacific in WWII.

In comparison to our troops in the E.T.O., we had a fruit cake compared to Vietnam. The weather in Europe is about the same as ours here in Norton, terrain about the same and we could see our enemy, where in Vietnam they never knew where the enemy was until it was too late.

I urge all Vietnam vets to talk about their experiences as they lived it. We will all learn something from them. Gil was absolutely right when he said Americans didn't support our troops and the war in

Your Turn

Vietnam. For this, SHAME! SHAME! on America and Americans. I talked to a lot of veterans when they came home and they told me people just ignored them. SHAME! SHAME! on our people.

Now to the first part of Vesta Hobbs' letter. Vesta, if you read my first *Letter to the Editor*, I said and I quote, "Sen. McCain was against increased funding for Medicare." The Democrats had to fly in Sen. Ted Kennedy in order for it to pass and he was suffering from brain surgery at the time.

You have in your letter and I quote, "Like his reasons for blaming Sen. McCain for passing increased funding for Medicare. WRONG."

For your information, the funding increase was for doctors who care for their Medicare patients. They deserve every bit of it and maybe more.

Now, Vesta, for the last part of your letter. McCain should run for president on his merits, not on his record as a prisoner of war. That's history. I will continue to disagree with him when and if I think he's wrong. I treated McCain in my first letter as a vet running for the presidency of the U.S.A. Nothing else and that's it.

What got my adrenaline going up was when you made up the quote that "when I belittled McCain I didn't respect the other GI's that served in other wars." That is an absolute false statement. I'll eat it if you can show me this in my first letter. By the way, you rant rave about the Democrats can pass anything they want to because

of the fact they have a one-vote majority. They can't because the one vote majority is (Sen. Joe) Lieberman and he votes with the Republicans.

Vesta, you have to have a 2/3rds majority in the Senate to pass an override and 60 votes to cut off a filibuster.

More about respect for other vets. Sally and I had the good fortune along with our siblings and their husbands and wives, to attend the dedication of the WWII Memorial in Washington, D.C., on June 28, 2004. After the dedication we went over to the Vietnam Memorial or *The Wall*. After looking at *The Wall* and the names, 50,000 plus or minus, we then each picked a name and then thought about it. I wonder where the mother, the father, brother, sister and maybe a wife and children are. Tears will run down your cheeks. I have tears in my eyes just writing and thinking about this.

So, Vesta, don't lecture me, an old WWII vet about respect for other GIs who served in other wars. I've been there and done that.

Vesta, you are right on one item: I wasn't a man because I was only 17 years old. You have to be 18 to be an adult.

Gen. Wesley Clark, former head of NATO, said in June that McCain is not qualified to be President of the United State of America. I believe him.

George Will, noted columnist and conservative, said that due to Sen. McCain's temperament and lack of knowledge on economics, he is not qualified to be president.

Vote Obama/Biden.

H.J. Austerman
Norton

Thumbs Up

To... *Second Chance Homeless Pet Society* Board of Directors and MC *Marvin Matchett*, for the wonderful time we had at Trivia Night, the efforts for recycling old cell phones and inkjets, and doing a wonderful job for their dog program. (e-mail)

To... *the City of Norton* and board, for starting the recycling project in Norton. (e-mail)

To... *the man* who helped *Max Schmitz* up a couple of weeks ago when he fell in his yard. Thank you for caring and helping him. (e-mail)

To... *Vesta Hobbs*, for her letter to the editor saying exactly what I thought of Mr. Austerman's letter and comments regarding Sen. McCain's service, Gov. Palin, and finally Sen. Obama's stand on abortion. By the way, you can count one more for McCain in your straw poll. (e-mail)

To... *Norton Community High School*, for an interesting Homecoming Week. Now, bring on those St. Francis Indians. (e-mail)

To... *Hank Austerman*, for your letter. (called in)

To... *all the parents*, who took time out to finish painting the numbers and the beak on the football field for all of the home games. (e-mail, proud Blue Jay football parent)

(To submit a name of names, please e-mail tom.d@nwkansas.com, call either 877-6908 or 877-3361, fax to 877-3732, mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave. 67654 or drop by the office. Thanks for your continuing input. - td)

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